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ABSTRACT

This paper describes a study designed to determine the status of the vertical file in public high school libraries in one Illinois county. The purpose of the study was to examine how vertical files were maintained, promoted, and used in the libraries. The data were collected via telephone and on-site interviews. All 22 library media centers in DuPage county were contacted and asked about the file. The eight most active vertical files and two of the average files in the high schools were chosen to be visited to determine if the files were as useful as the librarians indicated. A schedule was prepared for the on-site inspection to compare the files. Analyses of the data indicated that 19 of the high school libraries have active vertical files, 10 of which could be rated as excellent, five as average, and four as marginal; well-used files were considered important information resources; and more than half of the librarians felt that vertical files could not be replaced by technology. Some factors that could increase the use and quality of a vertical file were also identified, including periodic weeding, adding new materials regularly, designating a staff member to be in charge of the file, and promoting the file. The telephone and on-site interview instruments are appended. (JLB)

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THE STATE OF THE VERTICAL FILE IN DUPAGE COUNTY, ILLINOIS, PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARIES

by

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A Report Prepared Under the Direction of
Professor Patricia Cannon
In Fulfillment of the Requirements
for LIBS 571

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GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF AREA OF CONCERN

The vertical file has always been considered one of the standard reference tools in school libraries,[1] the collection spot for supplementary information which cannot stand on its own on a shelf because of its flimsy nature. In the past, when a library's research collection was made up exclusively of print materials (a local collection of reference books, non-fiction books accessed by a card catalog, and a collection of magazines accessed by a print index), the vertical file provided a significantly different approach to research and was counted among the few available research tools as being very important. With the introduction of the computer and other multi-media approaches to research, the number of research tools available increased dramatically, even at the high school level. Instead of being one of a small number of databases to be searched by the researcher, the vertical file became just one of many possible research tools.

With the advent of computer databases, the vertical file, a high maintenance database with none of the pizzazz offered by many computer software programs, may be losing priority as the new tools take over staff workers' time. If the vertical file suffers neglect, its usefulness diminishes because it is no longer current or promoted. In this age of cost cutting combined with skyrocketing prices of periodical subscriptions and books, it seems logical that school librarians everywhere would cherish an inexpensive, infinitely malleable, information rich, easy-to-use research tool which can be searched simultaneously by an entire classroom full of students. Determining whether and how DuPage County high school librarians are

[1] Tom Hodgson and Andrew Garoogian, The Vertical File in the Libraries of the City University of New York: A Survey, City University of New York, 1981, Dialog, ERIC, ED 221 216, 1.

making use of this significant research tool is the focus of this study, and if vertical files are no longer being used by librarians and students, it will be interesting to know why this is the case.

PROBLEMS TO BE STUDIED

1. Do DuPage County high schools have vertical files?
2. What factors influence the quality of a vertical file?
3. Must vertical files be costly (in terms of money, time and space) in order to be excellent?
4. How are the vertical files promoted?
5. How important do librarians feel vertical files are to their libraries' collections?
6. If vertical files are not being used, what other resources are being used to research current, controversial issues?
7. Can technology take the place of a vertical file in the high school setting?

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In the information currently available on vertical files, no one disputes the fact that vertical files can fill a unique niche in a library's collection. "There are few rules for vertical files, so there is a lot of room to 'do it your way.' Individual libraries determine what kinds of materials go into their supplementary collections and how the materials will be organized and managed."[2] Few other resources can match the versatility of a vertical file. A vertical file can be any size the librarian in charge feels it should be, and it can

[2] Clara L. Sitter, The Vertical File and its Alternatives: A Handbook, (Littleton, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 1992), 1.

contain whatever seems to be of the most use for the particular user group being served, unlike prepackaged databases such as a CD-ROM package or paper index. The librarian cannot alter the contents of these products to serve the needs of the library's population, nor can the products be made more "user friendly" if it seems that patrons are having trouble using them.

In a survey of university librarians in 1974-1975 (updated in 1980), librarians listed the following as being the most beneficial reasons for keeping a vertical file: it supplements the general book collection, it provides access to current and difficult-to-obtain materials, and it meets the demand for materials in brief format.[3] Other authors agreed with the librarians in the survey; Dwyer, whose article focussed on government documents, named the vertical file as being the best place to store quickly outdated statistical data, mostly presented in pamphlet format, available through government agencies.[4] This information would be time consuming for a high school student to obtain, so having the data readily available in a vertical file provides students access to resources to which they would not otherwise be exposed. Czopek felt that the objective of a vertical file is to "serve as an adjunct to general and reference collections by providing necessary and ephemeral information to the community."[5] The fact that a well-run vertical file can fill in the gaps of any library's collection makes it an appealing resource for libraries facing budget constraints. "Regardless of the size of the school or the size of the budget, there never seems to be enough time or money. With a budget of a few hundred dollars and volunteer help, many

[3] Hodgson & Garoogian, 6.

[4] Catherine M. Dwyer, "Foreign Countries, Young Adults, and Federal Publications: A Reference Solution," Reference Librarian 32 (1991): 151-152.

[5] Vanessa Czopek, The Vertical File, Staff Report, Mesa (Arizona) Public Library, 1986, Dialog, ERIC, ED 275 344, 5.

schools have put together fine vertical file collections."[6] Hodgson agreed that a stagnant budget and high demands for current information make the vertical file a natural place to turn for help since it can strengthen the book collection by filling in the gaps in areas of current interest with little cash outlay.[7]

The vertical file is a perfect research tool for a number of specific types of assignments. According to the survey by Hodgson and Garoogian, university librarians ranked short speeches, group discussions and short term papers as being the assignments for which the vertical file was used most. In a high school, the types of assignments listed above are some of the most common reasons for doing research. As Czopek stated, well-managed vertical files "present a variety of viewpoints on controversial issues . . . and keep pace with new trends and interests."[8] The speeches and group discussions often presented on the high school level revolve around controversial, current issues, and students and teachers want to include the most current information available in their arguments. Since online services are cost prohibitive, newspaper clippings and pamphlets in a vertical file can provide just such information for little cost.

With all of the reasons why a vertical file makes an excellent resource in a school library, it seems incredible that a vertical file might receive little use. A number of factors were mentioned in the available literature which could contribute to a vertical file being underused. Czopek lists inconsistent weeding, poorly chosen or out of date subject headings, filling it with a "hodge-podge of materials," and not designating a particular person to

[6] Sitter, 5.

[7] Hodgson & Garoogian, 2.

[8] Czopek, 5.

maintain the file as being the most likely reasons for a poor quality vertical file.[9] Thomas takes the argument a step further by looking at a poorly weeded vertical file from a student's point of view. A vertical file "clogged with out-of-date materials . . . discourages students who seek information on a current development and assume that a preponderance of old pamphlets signifies the absence of new data."[10]

Although a librarian may believe that a vertical file offers benefits to patrons, it may seem like an insurmountable task to start and maintain a decent file. The reasons given by one survey respondent for not having a vertical file at all were that to do the job right, all of the vertical file headings would need to match the headings currently used for the general book collection and the vertical file headings would need to be entered into the card catalog. Once established, the new file would need to be weeded frequently, making it too time consuming and expensive to be worth the effort.[11] Of course, this librarian does not even come close to listing all of the tasks that must be performed to keep a vertical file in peak condition. Besides weeding and choosing the right subject headings, one must constantly find new material, promote the material in the file and tailor the file to new uses which arise for it. In order to make sure the file is used after one undertakes the job of creating and maintaining it, librarians and researchers suggest discussing the file and its use during orientation and instruction sessions,[12] writing about it in library publications, using signs and occasional displays of

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[9] Czopek, 1.

[10] Joy Thomas, "Rejuvenating the Pamphlet File in an Academic Library," Library Journal 110 (October 15, 1985): 43.

[11] Hodgson, 4.

[12] Vernon Gifford and Jean Gifford, Effects of Teaching a Library Usage Unit to Seventh Graders, Paper presented at the thirteenth Annual Conference of the Mid-South Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA, November 14-16, 1984, Dialog, ERIC, ED 254 230, 4.

recent pamphlets,[13] including the vertical file headings on subject cards (reference guides to finding all of the information available in a library on a topic),[14] and demonstrating its usefulness at every opportunity.[15]

It is difficult to say what is actually done in school libraries concerning the vertical file since no surveys of school librarians have been discussed in the currently available literature. Bountiful information exists concerning what can and should be done with vertical files, but the only survey showing how vertical files are actually being used was updated thirteen years ago in university libraries in New York, prior to the mass introduction of the microcomputer into the high school library. Has access to new resources such as CD-ROM and possibly even online information in high schools greatly decreased allegiance to and reliance on such a standard reference tool as the vertical file? No information is available in the current literature, but this survey answers that question for DuPage County public high school libraries.

DEFINITIONS

Vertical File = Collection of pamphlets, clippings, pictures, maps and other supplementary materials often housed in file cabinets in libraries and used for research.

Closed File = A vertical file which is searched by staff members only and folders or individual items are checked out to the student one at a time.

Open File = Students are able to approach, open and search this vertical file by themselves without the help of a staff member.

NewsBank, ProQuest and **Infotrac** = All of these are brand names of CD-ROM databases which index magazine and/or newspaper articles. Some products available from each company contain the full text of the indexed materials,

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[13] Hodgson, 10.

[14] Marilyn Thompson, "Subject Cards: A Reference Aid," Voice of Youth Advocates 9 (August/October 1986): 127.

[15] Thomas, 47.

others provide summaries of selected articles, some only provide the bibliographic data necessary to locate an article through other means, such as direct subscription to the periodical, interlibrary loan, or subscription to a microfilm service.

UMI = University Microfilms, Inc., maker of ProQuest and supplier of microforms.

ASSUMPTIONS

1. All DuPage County public high schools have libraries.

2. All DuPage County public high school libraries have a variety of resources including a non-fiction book collection, reference book collection, encyclopedias, a periodicals collection and at least one computerized database.

3. No librarian would lie (intentionally or unintentionally) to make it seem as though he or she were doing a worse job than he or she actually is doing.

LIMITATIONS

1. The sample population for this study will be based on geographical feasibility rather than on any scientific basis. Since this will be a random sample based on accessibility, results may not be representative of the entire population.

2. Only ten libraries which have active vertical files, according to the answers given during a preliminary telephone survey, will be visited in person by the researcher due to time constraints.

METHODOLOGY

The statistics for this research project were collected using two different methods to insure the highest degree of accuracy in the areas of greatest importance. The Library Media Centers (LMCs) at all twenty-two of the public high schools in DuPage County were contacted by telephone. The researcher asked for the person in charge of maintaining the vertical file. An assumption was made here that there are five possible responses to this

request: (1) there is no vertical file in the LMC at all; (2) the person who answers the telephone does not know of the vertical file's existence; (3) no one is really in charge of the vertical file; (4) the person requested is not available at the moment; or (5) the person in charge of the vertical file is sought out and comes to the telephone. If the question elicited a puzzled response, the researcher asked to speak to a librarian. If no vertical file was maintained by the LMC at all, the librarian was asked why that library had chosen to have no file, and a number of possible answers were suggested if the librarian could think of no particular reason at the moment. To determine what resources, if any, were fulfilling the research needs often satisfied by vertical files, the librarian was asked to list the research tools the students used most for assignments requiring information on current events, controversial issues and other topics for which up-to-date, frequently changing information is needed. Finally, the librarian was asked if there had ever been a vertical file in that library, if so, when it was discarded, and if not, whether the librarian planned ever to install a vertical file.

If there was a vertical file in the LMC but no one was in charge of maintaining it, the librarian who came to the telephone was asked to answer the questions included in the interview schedule. In instances when the person in charge of the file was unavailable for questioning, the researcher asked when the person would be available, and a return call was placed at that time. In situations when the person in charge of the file was available to answer questions, the researcher conducted the interview immediately.

After questioning the librarians about the currency of the vertical file collection, how well the file is promoted and how it is used, the researcher divided the schools' vertical files into different categories based on the use

which was made of them. The researcher chose eight of the most active vertical files and two of the average files in the DuPage County public high schools to be visited by the researcher in person to determine if in fact the files were as useful as the librarians in charge had stated. In order to view the files objectively, a schedule was prepared in advance of the visits which allowed the researcher to compare the various files by looking for the same characteristics during each visit. A copy of this schedule may be found in the appendix. A number of popular topics were researched to see if the vertical files covered the topics at all and whether the material, if any, was current. Promotional techniques visible during the visit were noted as well as the location of the file and general arrangement of the library.

Once all of the data had been collected, it was analyzed to determine how vertical files are being maintained, promoted and used in actual public high school library situations. Trends were noticed among the vertical files studied, and groupings were made accordingly. The characteristics of the most active vertical files were described, as well as promotion techniques used by the libraries housing those vertical files. The schools with less than excellent files fell into two camps, and these groups were also analyzed for common characteristics. Another grouping was made of the schools which presently have vertical files but are in the process of phasing them out. The reasons for this decision have been compiled and are presented in the following section. For the school which had no vertical file at all, reasons for the neglect of this resource were described. Strengths and weaknesses common to many of the files, both active and inactive, have been determined. Finally, the researcher examined each librarians' feelings about the importance of his or her library's vertical file compared to other research

tools, and whether or not the librarian felt that the file could be replaced by technology.

RESULTS

The appendix contains the results of the telephone and on-site interviews which took place during the first twenty days of September, 1993. Of the twenty-two public high schools in DuPage County, twenty-one presently have vertical files. Two of the high schools are no longer weeding their vertical file collections and are planning to phase them out over the next two years. Nineteen schools, therefore, still add to and maintain their collections, although these nineteen vary greatly in their commitment to vertical files. Among these nineteen schools, three fairly distinct levels of commitment to vertical files emerged as the collected data was analyzed. Ten of the schools interviewed maintain excellent files, find their files very useful, and are proud of the resource they have created for their students and teachers. Five of the schools maintain average files which do not receive as much attention as those described as "excellent" above, but these five schools still felt that the vertical file is a valuable resource in their libraries today and worth whatever effort they are putting into it. The remaining four schools still have and maintain files but consider the files more of a secondary (or even last resort) resource than one of the research tools students should turn to first. These four files are referred to as the "marginal" files in the following pages.

Characteristics which tended to separate "excellent" collections from "average" or "marginal" collections were responsibility for the file, opinion of the responsible party concerning the importance of a vertical file, weeding

policies, promotion techniques, and location of the file.

Those schools with vertical files of marginal quality have files which vary in size from approximately one thousand files to two hundred files. None of these files are located near the periodicals collection; two of the four are located in the reference area of the library. The information in the files is not weeded regularly; in fact, there is no policy in any of these libraries concerning how long vertical file material should be kept.

When asked to describe the importance of the vertical file to their libraries' collections, the librarians being questioned all answered that vertical files are not very important to their collections, but three of the four added that vertical files still provide information not available from other sources. None of these librarians feel that vertical files could be completely replaced by technology, despite the librarians' lack of strong commitment to the resource.

The responsibility for maintaining these vertical files in two of the four schools belongs to "various" staff members; weeding, clipping, filing, and labeling fall to different people depending on who has the time or inclination to perform the task. The other two libraries have specific staff members assigned to the duty, but vertical file work is done at all four schools only when it can be "sandwiched in," as one of the librarians put it. All consider vertical file work to be a very low priority.

When asked how they publicize their vertical files to students, all four stated that the vertical file is mentioned during library tours, but never demonstrated in front of classes. Only two of the four have a listing of the vertical file topics for the students to look through, either incorporated into their card/online catalog or as a separate listing on top of the file itself. None have a sign over the file identifying it. All of these librarians stated that their

vertical file is used less often than other resources in their libraries, but all said that the files are used by students.

The vertical files which fell between the marginally maintained and the excellently maintained are here labeled the "average" files for simplicity's sake. Like the marginal files, the four average files possess a number of common characteristics. The responsibility for maintaining the file is more firmly placed upon the shoulders of one or two individuals, and the respondent was more likely to give a definite answer to the question, "When is work done on the vertical file?" Rather than to say that there is no time for the file, these librarians talked about maintaining during lulls or while sitting at a desk. In order to reduce the amount of time which needs to be devoted to a vertical file, one school stopped clipping newspapers for the file altogether, and that vertical file has become exclusively a pamphlet file. Three of the five librarians complained of understaffed facilities, although small staffs do not guarantee a poor quality file, based on the excellence of some of the files viewed in some one-librarian LMCs in DuPage County. None of these average files are located near the periodicals collection; three of the four were described as being housed along an open wall wherever there had been room to put it.

When asked how their files are being promoted to the students, only two of the five respondents said that they show students how to use the vertical file. One of the schools relies solely upon signs which list the vertical file among other resources on four photocopied pieces of paper posted around the library which are labeled "Have you tried . . . ?" This librarian stated that students use his file automatically as a result of seeing these signs and that no other promotional techniques are necessary to insure the file's use. This file

was also described as being used less often than the other basic resources found in his facility, however. Two of the other average files are being promoted using a variety of techniques: signs, demonstrations, subject headings listed in the card catalog, even, in one case, Pathfinders which include the vertical file as a resource to check. These files were described as being used less often than other basic resources.

One reason these vertical files are not being used as often as other resources might be the currency of the information included in them. The librarian who employs the greatest variety of techniques for promoting her file is encouraging the use of a file filled with material up to ten years old, by the librarian's admission. This file was visited in person by the researcher, and when examined, the file revealed a dearth of very current information. The most recent material available on the well-publicized subject of AIDS was from 1990. No materials at all were available on the subject of President Bill Clinton, although he is often in the news, popular with young people, recently elected into office, and he visited this particular school within the last year. One of the strengths this librarian listed for her vertical file is an emphasis on local interests. Students who use this vertical file to find current information on AIDS or President Clinton's visit to their school will be disappointed, and might develop the opinion that they will likely be disappointed again if tempted to use the file in the future.

Another librarian said that information stays in the file until something comes along to replace it. This policy guarantees that the file will be filled with information which is no longer useful and that newer, current materials added to this sort of collection will be masked by the overwhelming amount of worn out, out-dated pamphlets already housed there. This

collection was also among those visited by the researcher, and the entire file looked uninviting when approached due to the age of the cabinet, difficult-to-open drawers, and state of the materials inside them. Seventy-two pamphlets and clippings were available on the subject of AIDS, but the most recent one was dated 1990, and the oldest was from 1984. To find an article on Anorexia Nervosa in this vertical file, one has to plod through eighty articles and well-thumbed pamphlets on various diseases ranging from skin cancer to Otitis Media. Two articles on Anorexia from the same issue of a 1991 medical journal were found within this folder, but it seemed very unlikely that a student would have the patience that this researcher needed to locate these articles.

The other LMCs within this "average" category all stated that their materials range from three to five years old; one of the librarians admitted that the "three years" she initially gave as answer to this question is more of an ideal than an a truthful answer. Due to the maintenance, training and supervision required of her paraprofessional now that her library has been equipped with computer stations, the paraprofessional no longer has the time necessary to keep up with the weeding a vertical file requires. This file no longer receives as much use as it has in the past. The librarians who answered "three to five years" and did not qualify those answers in any way also stated that their files enjoy as much use as other basic resources in their libraries, especially, in one case, if useful files have been pulled out of the drawers prior to a class's visit.

The five respondents in this category varied greatly in their feelings about the importance of a vertical file to their library's collection. Two librarians felt that it is very well used, adds to the collection and is therefore

very important, two felt that although it is not important, it is useful because in one case it provides a different format and in the other it contains the most current information, and the last librarian felt that the vertical file will disappear when comparable technology is available and is not terribly important now.

The ten vertical files included in the "excellent" category here are not identical to one another, but they do share a number of interesting similarities. Seven of the ten vertical files rated excellent by this researcher are maintained by a librarian and an aide (or paraprofessional), and each has specific duties in regard to the file. Librarians make the final selection of materials to be added to seven of the ten files. In one of the LMCs, the librarian, now consumed with other responsibilities, has delegated the responsibility of selection to her paraprofessional but still maintains an advisory role when needed, and in the final two cases, a clerk or teacher aide is the sole caretaker of the vertical file, from selection to weeding to labeling. In the schools where the non-professional is the sole caretaker, the vertical file is attended to during lulls, desk time and institute days, but both of these women stated that they add new material to their files daily and that weeding is done with regularity so that the materials are no more than three years old in one case and five years old in the other.

One LMC's vertical file has a librarian as its sole caretaker and the wide variety of responsibilities which lie on the professional's shoulders in the high school library reduce the amount of time she can spend on the vertical file. This librarian conscientiously makes room for the vertical file on a regular basis, although she admitted that it falls to the bottom of the list when pressures to teach classes, perform reference services, select and catalog new

materials and other duties take up her day. She adds material to her file biweekly, and weeds it so that the material stays in the file no longer than five years.

All ten respondents try to maintain a consistent number of years' worth of information in their files, no older, on average, than three to five years. This kind of quality requires that weeding be performed on a regular interval, not just when new material takes the place of older materials.

Well used vertical files are well advertised. All ten of these files are mentioned during library tours and demonstrated for any classes which might find them useful, and the subject headings used in nine of the ten are accessible to students either through the online or card catalog or through a list or card file of the subject headings which the students can see. Adding the tenth file's subject headings to the online search system is a project which is planned for next year.

In DuPage County, at least, vertical files located in periodicals departments are excellent files. Not all of the excellent files are located near the periodicals, but the only four collections in or near periodicals are among the ten best files. Of the well-used files not in periodicals departments, four are in one-room, one story libraries and are, therefore, not separated by stairs or walls from periodicals collections. The researcher concludes that since the vertical file is used to house current, often quickly out-dated information, it best serves the types of assignments students often turn to periodicals to research. Among the files that are used most often in DuPage County are those that are housed near the periodicals because students have successful experiences using the vertical file while they are looking for information often covered in the most current sources. If a student is looking for

information often found in books, he or she will often be disappointed in the coverage of the vertical file; therefore, a vertical file housed near the non-fiction or reference collection will more likely be underused. Three of the five files which have been here categorized as "marginal" and one of the two which are being phased out were located in the reference department. Only one of the excellent files was described as being located in "an open area, closest to reference."

Eight of the ten schools stated that their vertical file is used as often as other basic resources in their library. One said that the file is used more often, and the last said that it is used almost as often. All felt that at the present time the vertical file holds a very important position in their library. Six of the ten looked at the vertical file as providing different, current information in a unique format. Three others saw ease of use as being one of the vertical file's greatest strengths.

Only two of the ten librarians felt that technology could substitute for a vertical file, but both felt that technological substitutes are so far out of their library budget's reach that there is little chance that the vertical file will ever be obsoleted. Four respondents saw the variety of information available through a vertical file as being beyond the reach of technology, at least at the present time. Another librarian felt that students with certain learning styles prefer the format of the information found in the vertical file over any other format available to them in the library. Since index services take at least ninety days to process new information, two librarians stated that technology will never take the place of a vertical file which can contain today's newspaper clippings. Even the files which have new material added to them only monthly still provide sorted access to new information two months

faster than paper or CD-ROM databases. Finally, one respondent pointed out that her vertical file can service an entire classroom full of students while a CD-ROM station can only be used by one student at a time.

Other factors were studied which revealed no great consistency among vertical files of similar quality. The factors which did not seem to matter were when work is done on the file, cost of materials, students method of access to the files, size of the vertical file, how often new material is added to the file, or subject headings used when labeling the folders.

Seven of the schools spend no money at all on vertical file materials, and these seven are scattered among the files of the highest and lowest quality. Three of the best files only contain items which cost less than five dollars. None of the best files are empty, however, despite their reliance on inexpensive or free materials. A plethora of materials representing a wide variety of sources is found inside their folders, and this is obtained by requesting free information from government agencies, special interest groups and corporations.

Fifteen of the twenty-one files are open for students to look through by themselves. Four others keep behind the desk only the items most likely to disappear, such as the topics presently being researched by a class or of perennial interest like abortion, child abuse, drugs, and gun control. Only two schools keep their entire vertical file collection out of the reach of students. Both of these closed files are among the best collections, but six of the best are completely open to students and two of the best keep hot topics behind the desk, so no consistency was noted which would lead one to advise choosing one method over another.

One school in each of the categories, from "excellent" all the way down

to "phasing out," has a file with approximately one thousand folders. Likewise, each of the categories contains a school with five hundred or fewer folders.

Fourteen of the twenty-one schools employ Sears subject headings for at least a starting point when labeling their file folders. Three schools are switching their allegiance from Sears to Library of Congress (LC) headings because they are interested in adding their file subject headings to a computer system which employs LC subject headings. Seven of the schools have taken advantage of the opportunity to create their own unique vocabulary by choosing the best wording choice from any one of a number of sources: Sears, Reader's Guide, Infotrac, Library of Congress, or whatever words their students seem to use most often to refer to a subject.

New material is the lifeblood of any collection, and all but one of the vertical files continue to have new information added to them. Surprisingly, some of the files added to daily are not among the best files in the county; conversely, some of the best files have materials added to them less often than some of their lesser used counterparts. One of the marginal files had new materials added only sporadically, but the other three said that they added material regularly. All five respondents in the "average" category said that they add material to their files on a regular basis: one adds daily, two add weekly, and one adds monthly. New items are added daily to half of the excellent files, the other half adds materials roughly once a week, although all ten said that new material is found daily and the delay is caused by the amount of processing the LMC does to each piece of material before it can be added to the file. Three of the best files use accession numbers; one excellent collection has mounted and laminated newspaper articles added to it; the

librarian in charge of another outstanding file writes the bibliographic data concerning each article on the inside of the file folder; in another of the best files, newspaper clippings are stored in mailing envelopes inside the file so that loose clippings will not become separated from their parent folder. All of the schools make note of the source data on each clipping and label each item with a subject heading. The deciding factor between marginal and average to excellent files appears to be the regularity, rather than the frequency, with which new material is added.

No consistency can be noted which suggests that those who focus their complete attention on vertical file duties for a certain amount of time daily will have better files than those who work on the file while providing another service simultaneously. In fact, vertical file duties appear to complement certain other library duties quite well. The researcher asked each librarian when work was done on the vertical files, and a number of phrases turned up repeatedly. The answer that work is done "during lulls" was used seven times, and the phrases "clips while monitoring activity," "when not busy" and "during desk time" were each used three times. The meaning of these phrases were variously defined. "During lulls" referred in some cases to waiting for students to check out materials or the times when no classes are scheduled to use the facility, others meant examination weeks or institute days, and still others were describing the minutes between reference questions. Activities which need to be monitored include students taking tests, using computers, or studying during study hall. One librarian said weeding the vertical file brings her out from behind her desk and makes her seem more accessible to students who might not otherwise want to "bother" someone who seems involved in a desk activity. Only two librarians take

vertical file materials home with them because they do not have time to finish it during their day, and two paraprofessionals perform vertical file duties exclusively during a segment of their day or week. Those LMCs with librarians who take materials home or paraprofessionals who work exclusively on the file number among those schools with the best files; there are seven other schools, however, with excellent files which do not have these arrangements.

Only the results from three of the twenty-two schools have not been included in the discussion thus far: those schools which are phasing the file out and the single high school with no file at all.

Of the two LMCs which are phasing out their files, one has lost interest in the file because the staff member who maintained it in the past has retired and no one wishes to pick up the responsibility. The staff members who remain do not consider the vertical file an important element of their library's collection, and although it is (or was) promoted using a wide variety of techniques, including all of those discussed earlier, the students' use of the file does not warrant the effort required to maintain it. No information is being added to or weeded from the file at all any longer. When asked what resources the students use to find information on current topics, this respondent listed NewsBank, Infotrac and ProQuest as the best sources for current information in her library.

The other library which is strongly considering phasing out the vertical file as a resource listed NewsBank, the Chicago Tribune Index and Infotrac as the research tools which have taken the place of the vertical file in students' searches for current information. This school's vertical file is maintained by the librarian, but she relies on teachers to bring in any new materials which

will be added to it. She adds nothing to it herself, nor does she weed the file. This librarian mentions the file during tours, and the subject headings are presently listed in the card catalog, although she is considering having these cards pulled. The only other promotion this file receives is any mention a teacher might make of it while giving his or her class an introduction to library materials. The respondent definitely felt that the vertical file plays a very unimportant role in her library, used much less often than the CD-ROM products to which her school subscribes. Surprisingly, however, she did mention that certain topics in the vertical file receive heavy use, such as a supplementary collection she has created on an aspect of sports because of a unit of study which one of the teachers is especially fond of teaching.

The lone school with no file at all has never had a file and does not plan to create a file in the future. The librarian said that she has no interest in undertaking the work involved in creating and maintaining a vertical file and that her students are well served by the resources already available to them. When asked to list the resources her students use to research current topics, the librarian said that the LMC subscribes to Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, The Christian Science Monitor on microfiche, and some periodicals on microfiche from UMI. She also stated that the library is looking forward to purchasing some CD-ROM products, such as NewsBank, in the future. The only major difference between this high school and the others included in the survey is that this high school serves only juniors and seniors. The sister school, serving the freshman and sophomore levels, does have a vertical file, and that file is included among those categorized as "average."

CONCLUSIONS

Eighty-six percent of the public high schools in DuPage County have active vertical files. Nine percent have files which they are considering phasing out, and four percent have no file at all.

Schools which have no vertical file or files of poor quality consider vertical files to be of little value to a collection. Based on the number of schools which do have well used, valuable files in DuPage County, this researcher concludes that a librarian does not value what he or she has not experienced. Well used files in DuPage County, considered very important resources by those who maintain them, are information rich, tailored collections of materials in a variety of formats from a wide variety of sources. Fifty-five percent of DuPage librarians stated that vertical files could not be replaced by technology because of the difference in format, source and availability of the information contained in their vertical files. Certainly, the files described varied in quality and levels of use, but the fact remains that even among librarians with files of marginal quality, three of four acknowledged that a vertical file is a unique resource which cannot be completely obsoleted. Only twenty-two percent of the schools felt that NewsBank, ProQuest, and/or Infotrac could fully substitute for a vertical file.

When trying to improve a vertical file, the survey results indicate that the following should not make any significant difference in increasing the file's use or quality: spending more money to purchase items for the file; opening a closed file or closing an open one; increasing the number of folders in the file; using a certain vocabulary when creating subject headings; adding new materials more frequently (assuming that they are already being added regularly); or insisting that time be scheduled into the responsible party's day

solely for the purpose of vertical file maintenance rather than allowing the person to perform the duties in conjunction with other complementary tasks.

The survey results point toward a number of factors which can increase the use and quality of a vertical file: periodic weeding with a predetermined cut-off date for older materials; adding new materials on a regular basis; designating a staff member who will be responsible for the file, with or without the help of others; promoting the file, especially by demonstrating it to classes, mentioning it on tours and including its subject headings in the card or online catalog; and moving the file to the periodicals area or at least considering it part of the periodicals collection, wherever it is located, by mentioning the vertical file for any assignment which studies current and controversial issues.

In order to have a well-used, high quality vertical file in a high school library, one does not need to have unlimited space, funding or time. Once the file cabinets and folders are purchased or scavenged, materials collection requires a watchful eye (on the lookout for free pamphlets) and a staff member who considers vertical file clipping a priority whenever free time presents itself. Promoting a file is an important element in making it successful, but the promotional techniques which have the most impact require little investment of time or money once the initial process is completed. The most time intensive promotional technique is that of entering the subject headings into the card catalog or online catalog, although the long term benefits are well worth the effort, for this requires no repetition and only a yearly updating if changes have occurred to the file. Mentioning a file on tours and demonstrating the file, although these need to be repeated for every class coming in, will have long term benefits because once each

student feels comfortable finding his way around the file, he will be a repeat user for future assignments. No extensive training is necessary, there is never any "down time" with a vertical file, and an unlimited number of students can use it simultaneously. These factors will help, free of charge, to encourage additional use of the file.

In terms of the expense of staff time, it is important to designate a particular staff member as the party responsible for the vertical file, but it is not necessary for the person to shoulder the burden exclusively, nor is it necessary for the person to devote time solely to vertical file duties. The present roles of the library staff can be examined to determine which staff members have duties most compatible with vertical file duties, and jobs can be parceled out accordingly. One aspect of a vertical file which makes it an appealing resource is that the work which needs to be done for it can be successfully accomplished while a person is occupied with another activity, such as checking out materials, monitoring student activity, guarding an exit, performing light reference services or running a testing center.

Housing a file in a limited space requires that it contain only folders for topics which reflect the interests and curriculum needs of students and teachers, but as long as the needs of the students at the school are being met, the number of folders within the file does not influence the quality of a file.

Vertical files surely do continue to play an important role in the libraries which use them in DuPage County. No one denies that vertical files still require a great commitment of time to keep them in the best of shape, but fortunately, that time often naturally complements the ebb and flow of library work at the high school level.

APPENDIX

SCHEDULE A: TELEPHONE INTERVIEW: THE STATE OF VERTICAL FILES IN PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA CENTERS

1. May I speak to the person in charge of your vertical file?
If yes, go to #7. If there is no file, continue:

2. Why have you chosen not to have a vertical file?
Possibilities:
   a. No room
   b. Too much work to keep up
   c. No one used it
   d. Old fashioned
   e. Too expensive to start one
   f. No interest in it
   g. Enough other materials; did not need it

3. What resources do your students use to research:
   a. Current events topics
   b. Controversial issues for debates and speeches
   c. The latest information on foreign countries

4. Has there ever been a vertical file in your LMC?
If no, go to #6.
If yes:

5. When was it discarded?
Possibilities:
   a. During remodeling
   b. When computers/other resources moved into the LMC
   c. When a previous librarian retired/left

6. If there has never been a vertical file, do you plan to ever install one?

7. If the library does have a vertical file, approximately how many files are contained in it?
If unsure, ask:
   a. How many file cabinets are filled with vertical file material?
   b. How many drawers does each cabinet have?
   c. Are all or most of the drawers filled?

8. Where is the vertical file located?
Possibilities:
   a. Reference area
   b. Periodicals area

9. How do students access the information in the vertical file?
Possibilities:

a. Open: They can open the drawers themselves and look
b. Closed: They look through a list or drawer of subject headings and the file is pulled for them

10. Is vertical file material circulated?
Possibilities:

a. Yes
b. No
c. Under special circumstances only

11. Who maintains the vertical file?
Possibilities:

a. Librarian
b. Paraprofessional
c. Clerk
d. Student aide
e. Volunteer
f. Various/not defined

12. When is the vertical file work performed?

13. How old is the information allowed to be, discounting items kept for historical reasons?
Possibilities:

a. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 years
b. No specific cut off date
c. Keep old items until they can be replaced by new, no matter how old they are

14. How often is new material added to collection?
Possibilities:

a. Daily
b. Weekly
c. Monthly
d. Quarterly
e. Sporadically

15. What does the file contain?
Possibilities:

a. Curriculum related materials
b. Popular interest materials
c. Free items
d. Purchased items

16. Under what headings are the materials listed?
Possibilities:

a. Sears Subject Headings
b. Library of Congress Subject Headings
c. Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature subject headings
d. Infotrac headings
e. Librarian's own choice for wording of subject headings

17. How is the vertical file promoted?
Possibilities:

a. Mentioned during library tours
b. Mentioned during instructional segments on library usage
c. Demonstrated during instructional segments on library usage
d. Vertical file subject headings are listed on catalog cards/in online catalog
e. Included in research guides which show students how to find more information on a topic (e.g., Pathfinders, Subject Cards)
f. List or file of vertical file subject headings is available for students to see
g. Sign posted near it

18. How is the vertical file used?
Possibilities:

a. Kinds of assignments for which it is most useful:
    i.. Short speeches
    ii. Short term papers
    iii. Group discussions/panel discussions
b. Most important kinds of topics:
    i. Current events
    ii. Controversial issues

19. How important do you feel the vertical file is to your library's collection?

20. Do you feel that the vertical file is used as often as other basic resources in your library's collection?
Possibilities: vertical file is used **more often, as often, less often** than the following:

a. Card catalog/Online catalog
b. Periodicals collection
c. Encyclopedias
d. Infotrac or other CD-ROM database

21. Do you feel that technology could take the place of a vertical file?

SCHEDULE B: ON-SITE INSPECTION OF VERTICAL FILES

1. Name of school:_____

2. Approximate size of vertical file:_____

3. Are these subjects included in the vertical file? How well are they covered?

TOPIC:	SUBJECT HEADING UNDER WHICH IT WAS FOUND:	# OF ITEMS IN FILE:	MOST RECENT ITEM IN FILE:	OLDEST ITEM IN FILE:	TYPES OF ITEMS IN FILE:
ABORTION:					
AIDS:					
ANOREXIA NERVOSA:					
PRESIDENT CLINTON:					

4. What promotional techniques are visible in this library which encourage use of the vertical file?

Signage:_____

Displays of vertical file material:_____

Pathfinders/Resource Guides:_____

Other:_____

5. Where is vertical file located?

6. Comments concerning file/library:

RESULTS OF TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS WITH DUPAGE LIBRARIANS

School:	Approximate # of files:	Location:	How do students access the info?	Is information circulated?
1	500	Periodicals	Closed	Yes
2	840	Open Area; Reference	Open	Yes
3	820	Under Online Cat./1 rm.	Hot topics=Closed	Yes
4	800	Under Online Cat./1 rm.	Open	Yes
5	525	Periodicals	Open	Yes
6	625	Browsing area/1 rm. lib.	Open	Yes
7	1,000	Near Infotrac/1 rm. lib.	Open	Yes
8	800	Between Ref. & Per.	Hot topics=Closed	Yes
9	600	Periodicals	Open	Yes
10	850	Periodicals	Closed	Yes
11	240	Bare wall/1 rm. library	Open	Yes
12	1,000	Along wall, open area	Hot topics=Closed	Yes
13	500	Near Indexes	Open	Yes
14	400	Bare Wall; Ref.	Open	Yes
15	600	Reference	Open	Yes
16	1,000	Reading Room	Hot topics=Closed	Yes
17	375	Reference	Open	Yes
18	200	Reference	Open	Yes
19	675	Open Area	Open	Yes
20	400	Reference	Open	Yes
21	1,000	Along Wall	Open	Yes
22	0			

RESULTS OF TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS WITH DUPAGE LIBRARIANS

School:	Who maintains the VF?	When is work done on VF?	How old is information allowed to be in your file?
1	Clerk	During lulls & institute days	3 years
2	Librarian	On a regular basis, but it's at bottom of list	5-6 yrs.
3	Lib. selects, clerk weeds	When not busy	2-3 yrs.
4	Lib. selects/ weeds, clerks clip/ mount	Aids clip while monitoring activity	5-7 yrs.
5	Lib. selects/ weeds, clerk maintains	Lib.=At home; clerk=one pd. a day	5-7 yrs.
6	Lib. selects, parapro maintains	Designated duty of part-timer 2 days/ wk	2-5 yrs.
7	Lib. selects, parapro files	Lib. clips at home; parapro during lulls	5 yrs.
8	Teacher aid	During lulls and desk time	5 yrs.
9	Lib. selects, Parapros clip & weed	Parapro clips while monitoring activity	3 yrs.
10	Parapro; Librarian advises	Desk time & during lulls; more time needed	3-5 yrs.
11	Librarian, student aid, secretary	Finding time is a problem	10 yrs.
12	Lib. selects, aid clips	During lulls	Keep until info is replaced
13	Paraprofessional	Not enough time; while watching computers	Ideally, 3, but not actually
14	Lib., test center aid	During lulls and desk time	5 yrs.
15	2 librarians, various others	Stopped clipping; maintain during lulls	2-3 yrs.
16	Librarian, parapro	When there's time. Not often.	No specific # of years
17	Aid, various others	Not enough time; sandwiched in	No specific # of years
18	Paraprofessional	When not busy; very low priority	No specific # of years
19	Parapro, clerk, various others	Weed only when problems are noted.	Keep until info is replaced
20	Lib. maintains; teachers bring mat'ls.	When not busy; very low priority	No longer weeding
21	No one; clerk retired	Not at all since clerk retired	No longer weeding
22			

RESULTS OF TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS WITH DUPAGE LIBRARIANS

School:	How often is new material added to VF?	Important topics in VF: (Every VF focussed on current events and controversial Issues)	Is information purchased for file?	Headings used:
1	Daily	Countries, hobbies	Yes	Own words
2	Biweekly	Local, Chicago	Yes	Sears, LC, own
3	Weekly	Local	No: most donated	Sears over to LC
4	Weekly	Local	Yes: <$5	Sears, own words
5	Weekly	Govn't, Latin Am.	No	RG, some Infotrac
6	Daily	"You were there" info, Indians	Yes: <$5 (few)	LC
7	Semiweekly	Govn't, politics, teen interest	No: most free	Sears, own words
8	Daily	Psychology, history	Yes: Gov. Docs.	Sears over to LC
9	Daily	Countries, diseases, teen issues	Yes, if excellent	Sears, own words
10	Daily	Local, teen interest, debate	Yes	RG, own words
11	Monthly	Local, countries	Yes: <$3	Sears, RG
12	Weekly	Travel, biog., disease, ann. rpts	Yes: $200/yr.	Sears over to RG
13	Daily	Countries, presidents	Yes, if excellent	Sears
14	Weekly	Endangered species, animals	Yes: some	Sears over to LC
15	Weekly	Past graduates, biography	No	LC
16	Semiweekly	For. lang., sci., pictures, art	Yes	Sears
17	Weekly	Fashion designers, local	No	Sears
18	Sporadically		Yes	A-Z (didn't know)
19	Biweekly	Countries	Yes	Sears, RG
20	Sporadically		No	Sears
21	Not adding		No: most free	Didn't know
22				

RESULTS OF TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS WITH DUPAGE LIBRARIANS

School:	How is the VF promoted? 1=signage; 2=mentioned on tours; 3=demonstrated to classes; 4=headings listed in card catalog/online	Assignments for which VF is most useful: (Every VF was used by speech classes)
1	2; 3; 4; teachers mention it during lesson	Business; history; communication arts
2	2; 3; 4; list for kids to see	Longer research --variety of sources
3	2; 3; 4; Pathfinders	Short term papers
4	2; 3; 4 (this yr.); list for kids; bulletin bds.	Current issue research papers
5	1; 2; 3; headings list for kids to see	Govn't; Social issues for Eng. class
6	2; 3; 4 (in future)	Health; Hist.; longer repts--mult. sources
7	2; 3; list for kids; hot topic=bright folder	History term papers; debate; govn't.
8	1; 2; 3; 4; headings list for kids to see	English classes; Psych.; HIstory
9	1; 2; 3; 4; list for kids; bulletin bds.	Model U.N.; bio.; debates; psych; health
10	1; 2; 3; list for kids; bulletin bds.	Debates; short term papers; group discuss.
11	1; 2; 3; 4; Pathfinders	Soph. research papers
12	1; "Students look in it automatically."	Business; For. Lang.; Science
13	2; 3; 4; headings list for kids to see	Longer reports--multiple sources needed
14	4; pulls useful files for classes	Debate
15	2; headings list for kids to see	Short term papers; biographical studies
16	2; headings list for kids to see	Foreign lang.; Eng.; science; art
17	2; 4; headings list for kids to see	Debate; fashion design
18	2	
19	1; 2; was listed on cards, not in online cat.	Freshman World Cultures class
20	1; 2; 4; teachers mention it during lesson	
21	2; 3; 4; list for kids; Pathfinders	
22		

RESULTS OF TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS WITH DUPAGE LIBRARIANS

School:	Importance of VF to your library's collection:	Use of VF vs. other tools:
1	Vital; students turn to it for newest information	As often
2	Very; most current and different info.	Almost as often
3	Different facet; very current	As often
4	Different types of sources; easy to use	As often
5	Would like not to need it, but can't afford tech.	As often
6	Recent, succinct info in a good format	More often
7	Easier to use than microfiche, cheap & well used	As often
8	Very important; some teachers say it's too easy	As often
9	Very important; different information	As often
10	Very important; different info; fills gaps	As often
11	Very well used; use is encouraged.	>Many ref. books
12	Will disappear when comparable tech is affordable	Less often
13	Was in past; now collects misc.; another format	Less often
14	Most current info, but will be pared down	As often when pulled
15	Adds to collection; supplement	As often
16	Less than previously, but still has a spot	Less often
17	Not very important, but different info	<Online Cat/CD-ROM
18	Not very important	Less often
19	Questionable, but you can't get same info elsewhere	Less often
20	Not very important	Less often
21	Not important	Not used
22	Never had a VF and don't need it; we have RG	

RESULTS OF TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS WITH DUPAGE LIBRARIANS

School:	Could it be replaced by technology?
1	No; CD-ROM & paper indexes still 90 days behind
2	VF still provides most current & different info
3	Different format appeals to certain learning style
4	Technology doesn't offer same variety of info
5	Can't afford comparable technology
6	Can't get this information or this format on CD-ROM
7	If full text & backfiles were available
8	Not the same information or formats
9	VF provides a whole class with resources at once
10	VF provides different information
11	Not enough CD-ROM stations
12	Would like color image doc. delivery online first
13	Newsbank's full text product = good substitute
14	Would keep local info & files on current stuff only
15	VF would still provide different information
16	Can't afford CD-ROM on every subject
17	Would still keep it
18	VF still provides an additional resource
19	Will cut it back when CD-ROMs are networked
20	Yes; CD-ROMs are better products
21	Yes; Students use full-text ProQuest, Infotrac
22	We have microfiche now & will get CD-ROM soon

RESULTS OF ONSITE VISITS TO TEN DUPAGE VERTICAL FILES

School:	Approximate size of VF:	# of items:	ABORTION Most recent:	Oldest item:	# of items:	AIDS Most recent:	Oldest item:
Excellent files:							
3	820	195	May-93	1988	372	Mar-93	1985
4	800	120	Apr-93	1977 (Hist)	250	Feb-93	1986
5	525	480	Aug-93	1981	880	Apr-93	1986
6	625	100	May-93	1990	100	Jun-93	1987
7	1000	100	May-93	1978 (Hist)	330	May-93	1990
8	800	60	Apr-93	1979 (Hist)	150	Sep-93	1986
9	600	75	May-93	1973 (Hist)	300	Sep-93	1990
10	850	134	May-93	1966 (Hist)	115	Jun-93	1986
Average files:							
11	240	86	Jan-93	1979 (Hist)	72	1990	1984
12	1000	65	Oct-91	1971 (Hist)	150	Feb-93	1983

RESULTS OF ONSITE VISITS TO TEN DUPAGE VERTICAL FILES

School:		ANOREXIA			CLINTON, BILL			Closest match:
	# of items:	Most recent:	Oldest item:		# of items:	Most recent:	Oldest item:	
3	96	1992	1979		NONE	1992		US Pol. & Govn't.
4	15	1991	1986		NONE	Mrs. C: 1992		US Govn't
5	12	1987	1983		10	Jan-93	1900 reprint	Presidents--US
6	9	1989	1982		9	May-93	Feb-93	Clinton Econ. Plan
7	28	1992	1982		24	Jun-93	Jan-93	Clinton, Bill
8	17	1992	1984		35	Aug-93	1992	Clinton, Bill
9	45	May-93	1990		10	Apr-93	1990	Presidents
10	47	Jun-93	1983		47	Jun-93	1988	Clinton, Bill
11	8	1992	1981		NONE	Bush/Dukakis		US Elections
12	2	1991	1991		NONE	DuPage: 1990	1968	Elections

RESULTS OF ONSITE VISITS TO TEN DUPAGE VERTICAL FILES

School:	Types of items in vertical file:
	CQ Res=CQ Researcher; ERR=Editorial Research Reports;
	Nwspr=Newspaper clippings; Mag=Magazine articles;
	Opp. VP=Opposing Viewpoints; Bibs=Bibliographies;
	SIRS=Social Issues Resources Series; $=paid pamphlets
3	NY Times; SIRS; Support grp info; CQ Res; $+free pamph
4	Local Nwspr; $ Pamph; Opp. VP; Stats; ERR; Mag; Hotline
5	Nwspr; Mag; Gov. stats.; Referral service info; free pamph
6	Nwspr; $+free pamph; Gov. docs; ERR; "see also" refs; mag
7	Mostly nwspr; Mag; Hotlines; $+free pamph; Opp. VP
8	Mostly nwspr; Gov. docs; $+free pamph; Charts; Hotline
9	Nwspr; Mag; CQ Res; Free pamph; Bibs; Pathfinders; SIRS
10	Nwspr; CQ Res; Free pamph; Booklets; Gov. docs; Mag; Ads
11	Nwspr; Mag; $ Pamph; CQ Res; Hotline Stats; Gov. docs
12	$+free pamph; Mag; Nwspr; Charts; Gov. docs

RESULTS OF ONSITE VISITS TO TEN DUPAGE VERTICAL FILES

School:	Comments:
3	Multiple folders on hot topics; 4 restricted drawers. Wide variety of topics.
4	Articles mounted on construct. paper & laminated. Beautifully maintained.
5	VF marked as 1 of 5 research stations; detailed divisions of hot topics.
6	Uses VF to fill out gen. coll. where holes exist. Training student to help w/VF
7	Small library; VF well used & well maintained. Tailored to curric. needs.
8	VF located on 2nd floor with periodicals, 973, Biogs, and CD-ROM products.
9	Hot topics broken down into teen interest areas. Calls VF "The Workhorse."
10	Multiple folders for hot topics; relies on VF to fill out collection .
11	Clinton visited this school 2/11/93. Staff = 2 librarians & secretary.
12	VF listed on "Have You Tried...?" posters. VF looks worn out & is hard to open

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